

Learning from the Public: Museums for Me and Reimagine Our Museums

We will get started shortly.

Make sure that your speakers are on and your volume is turned up, there is music playing while you wait!

This session will be recorded.

Thank you to our Partners:



Learning from the Public: Museums for Me and Reimagine Our Museums

Speakers:



Victoria Dickenson



Jennifer Forsythe
Acting Executive Director
of Governance
Alberta Museums
Association



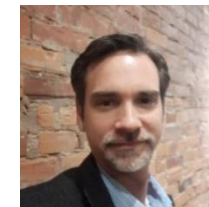
Caroline Loewen
Project Lead
Alberta Museums
Association



Sonja Macdonald
Co-Founder and
Principal
Civicplan



Sonia Mrva



Paul Shaker
Co-Founder and
Principal
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Moderator:

Sascha Prieve
Associate Vice President,
Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships
Royal Ontario Museum



**OMA
CONF
2021**

reimagination
reopening
recovery

ALBERTA MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION

Reconsidering Museums

Articulating the Value of Museums to Our
Communities

Project Introduction

“The walls of the museum should be porous, allowing ideas to flow in and out. When a community views the museum as 'their' place then you have made progress.”

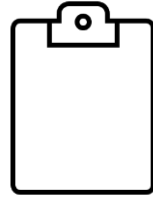
- Survey respondent



Timeline

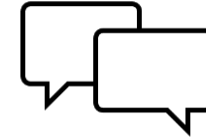


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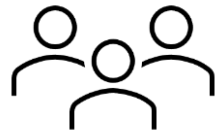
online survey respondents

87



dialogue session participants

1400



public opinion research
respondents

500,000+

Over half a million Canadians
reached

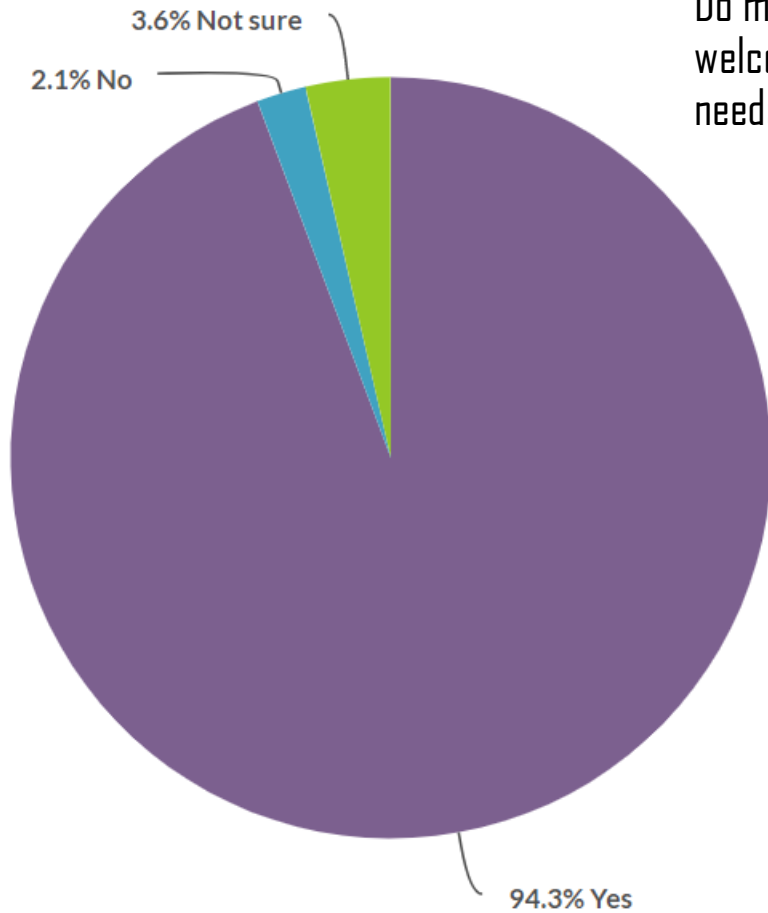


**What do museums mean to you?
Tell us what you think!**

**DES
MUSÉES
POUR MOI.**

**MUSEUMS
FOR ME.**

Access

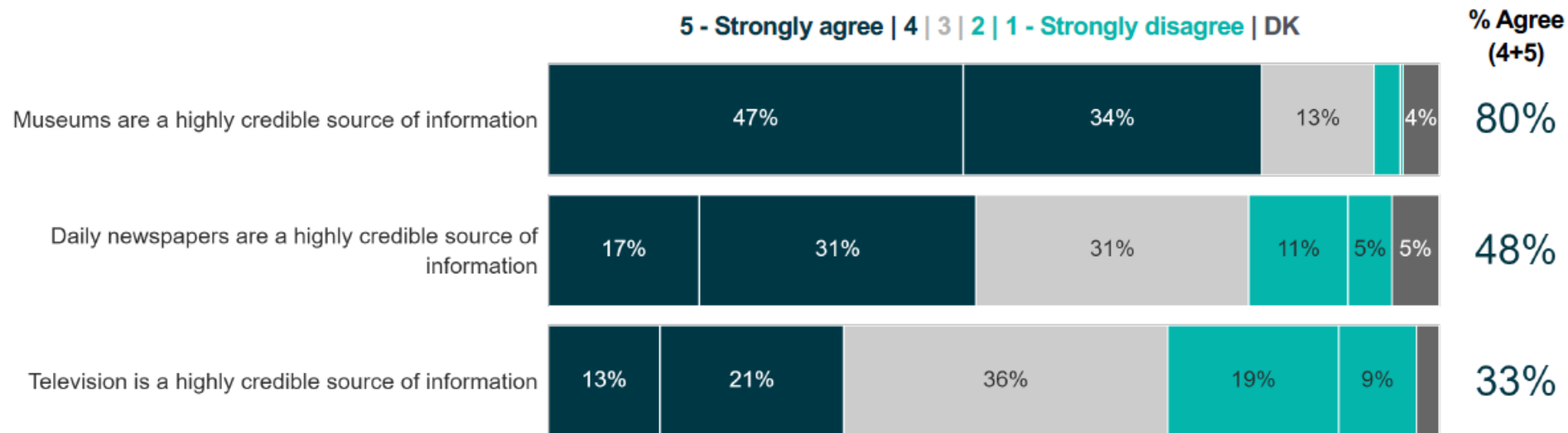


Do museums make you feel welcome and provide for your needs?

“Inclusive, complex, and nuanced narratives about the diverse peoples in my community.”

- Survey respondent

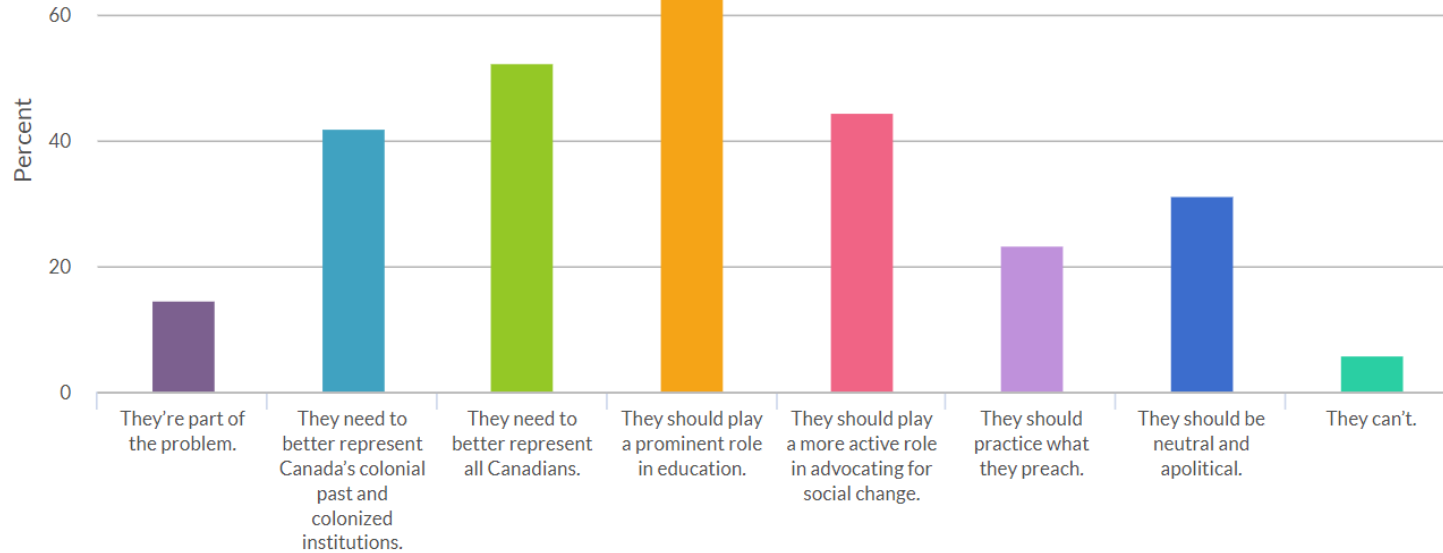
Authority



“Museums are invested with authority and have a responsibility to deconstruct the harmful narratives they were responsible for upholding and reinforcing.”

- Survey respondent

Activism



How can museums address societal issues like climate change, technological innovation, reconciliation, and racial injustice?

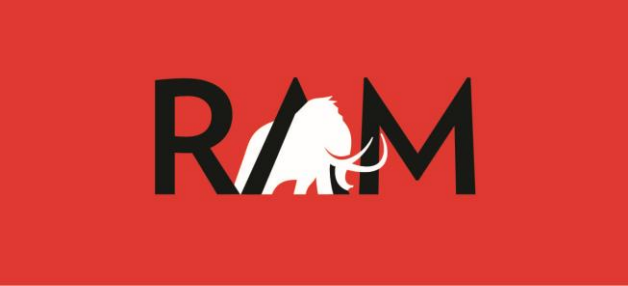
“Smash the patriarchy. Dismantle systemic racism. Unlearn white supremacy.”

- Survey respondent

“More dialogue is needed - museums are a comfortable neutral space for that.”

- Survey respondent

Value Proposition and Pilot Phase



National Rollout

Fall 2022

Reconsidering Museums is an initiative undertaken by a consortium of museum associations from across Canada, with support from the Government of Canada.

Alberta Museums Association
Association of Manitoba Museums
Association Heritage New Brunswick
Association of Nova Scotia Museums
BC Museums Association
Canadian Museums Association

Community Museums Association of Prince Edward Island
Museum Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
Museums Association of Saskatchewan
Ontario Museum Association
Société des Musées du Québec
Yukon Historical and Museum Association

Get in touch!

Caroline Loewen, Project Lead *Reconsidering Museums* cloewen@museums.ab.ca



Reconsidering Museums

Articulating the Value of Museums to our communities

Presented in collaboration with the Alberta Museums Association

ALBERTA MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION

RECONSIDERING MUSEUMS

ARTICULATING THE VALUE OF MUSEUMS TO OUR
COMMUNITIES

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ALBERTA MUSEUMS
ASSOCIATION



MUSEUMS
FOR ME.

WHAT DO MUSEUMS MEAN TO YOU?

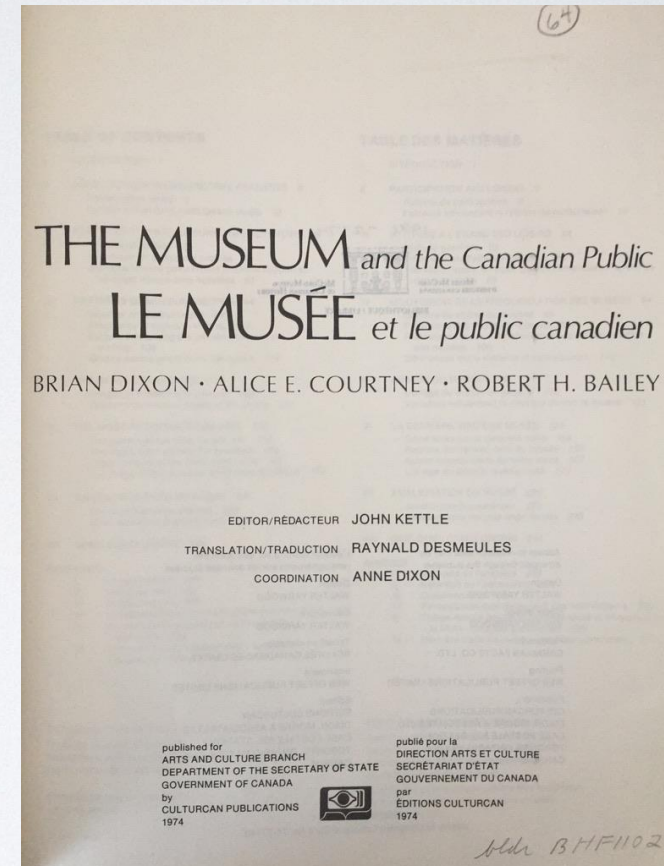
A partnership of Canadian museum organizations has come together to spark a national conversation about the value of museums and wants to hear from you.

LISTENING TO CANADIANS 2021

LISTENING TO CANADIANS 1973

Dixon, Courtenay and Bailey, *The Museum and the Canadian Public* (1974)

- 7,230 personal interviews were conducted across Canada
- detailed surveys left with interviewees
- over half (57%) returned these questionnaires



CANADA 1973

- Canada's population was just under 22.5 million
- The population was younger (10% over age 65, now 20%), less diverse (15% foreign born, now 25%), less well educated – (fewer than 10% of Canadians had university degrees)
- 838 museums in Canada



LISTENING TO CANADIANS 1973

- 1967 Centennial of Confederation
- 1968 National Museums of Canada Act
- 1969 Official Languages Act
- 1971 Canadian Multiculturalism Policy
- 1972 National Museum Policy



LISTENING TO CANADIANS 1973

- Half of Canadians visited an historic site and almost half visited some kind of museum in the last 12 months.
- over a five-year period, 84% had visited a museum at least once;
- a core of Canadians – 13% – were non-goers, who had not visited any museum in five years.
- Canadians who visited museums most frequently were urban, younger, and better educated, with higher incomes



LISTENING TO CANADIANS 1973

Canadians described why they did not visit more often:

- museums were too far away and difficult to get to;
- they museums were often physically uncomfortable and unsettling;
- they Canadians wanted more interactive exhibitions, more learning opportunities, and a more welcoming place.

What would make Canadians visit more often?

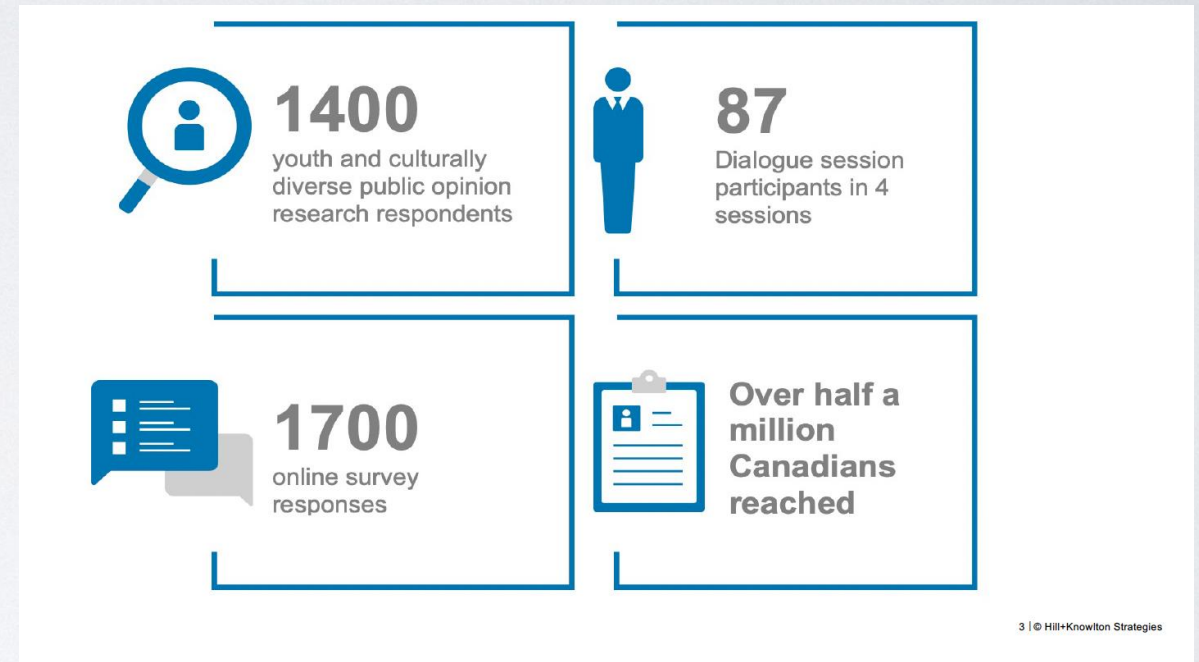
- free entry;
- free guidebooks and pamphlets;
- artists and craftsmen demonstrations;
- more advertising and publicity about what museums were really like;
- more advertising and publicity about museum activities;
- sections designed for young children.

“A great number of respondents strongly support the concept of the museum while for the most part avoiding the reality.”

Dixon, Courtney and Baily 1974

LISTENING TO CANADIANS 2021

- Leger Opinion's online panel: 1,400 Canadians over the period March 12-17, 2021.
- The sample was randomly selected based on the quotas to reflect census data for age, gender and regions in Canada.
- Respondents who identify as "Indigenous" and those with a household income below \$40,000 were oversampled by an extra 200 cases each



CANADA 2021

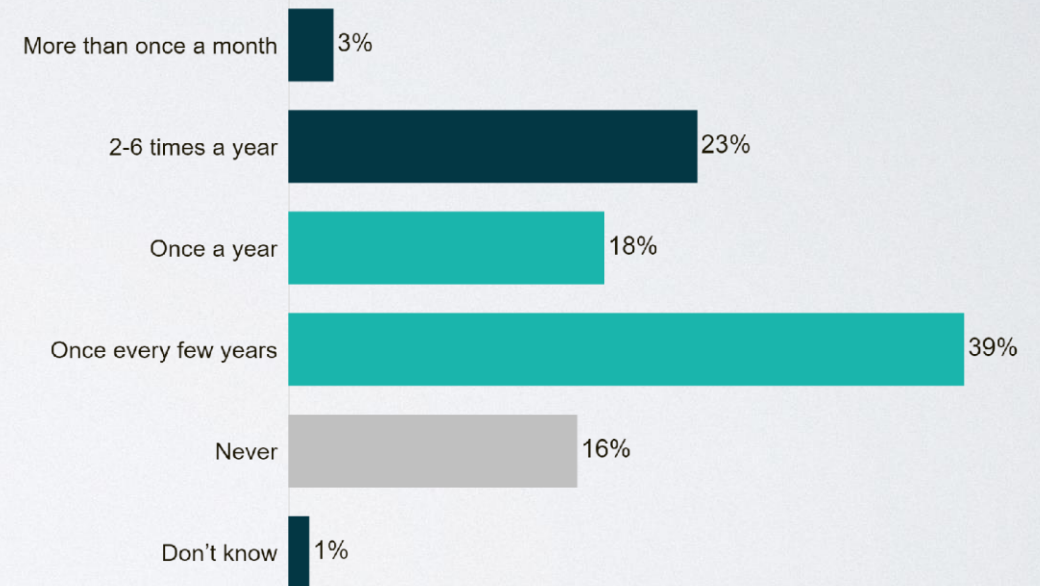
- Canada's population is 38 million and 84% of us live in urban areas.
- The population is older (20% over age 65), more diverse, particularly in cities, and better educated.
- There are 2600 museums.



<https://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/safety-measures/>

LISTENING TO CANADIANS 2021

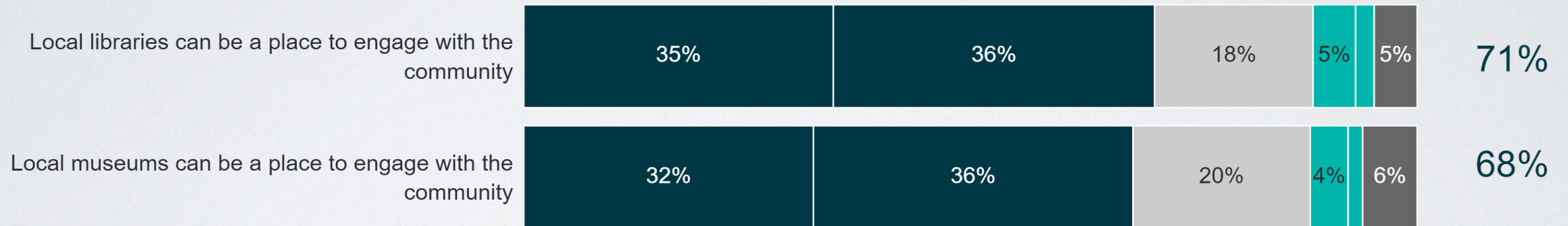
- Most respondents (over 80%) visit a museum every few years
- Over one in four visit frequently (26%)
- One in six say they never visit a museum (16%)



Q2 Before COVID-19, how often did you visit museums?

LISTENING TO CANADIANS 2021

5 - Strongly agree | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 - Strongly disagree | DK



No significant difference between agreement levels between both these statements.

LISTENING TO CANADIANS 2021

- Canadians know about and visit museums, feel welcome in them, and recognize them as inclusive spaces.
- Nearly all want more representative and diverse museums.
- Canadians value museums as conservators and teachers. They have the public's trust, but the terms of this are shifting.
- Canadians are divided on the question of neutrality – but not on the need to take a leading role on important issues.

WHAT'S CHANGED (OR NOT)

VISITATION	1973	2020
% of Canadians visiting a museum in last 12 months	48%	44%
% visiting in last 5 years	84%	82%
% who never visit	13%	16%
Museums are expensive	21%*	23%
Museums are elitist	28%	9%

* Average of 14% goers and 28% non-goers

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR CANADIANS ?

- Canada is becoming more visibly diverse, particularly in urban centres. By 2036 people of colour will be about one-third of the population.
- Canada's Indigenous population is growing.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR CANADIANS ?

- Canada is aging. In 2021, there are more Canadians over 65 than under 14. By 2030, 1 in 4 will be over 65.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR CANADIANS ?

- Canadians are educated (63% 25-34-year-olds have tertiary education).
- Canadians are connected - 94% of Canadians have access to broad band at home; exceptions – north, on reserve

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR CANADIANS ?

- Canada's climate is changing.
- Canada's biodiversity is declining.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR MUSEUMS?

- It is clear that museums are still **highly valued**, both as places to learn and to be inspired, and as places that preserve artifacts and help us better understand ourselves and others.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE FOR MUSEUMS?

- It is also clear that museums need to adapt and change to remain valued, to become **more inclusive and representative** of an increasingly diverse country, and to become **agents of social change**.



MUSEUMS
FOR ME.

WHAT DO MUSEUMS MEAN TO YOU?

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Thank you.

victoria.dickenson@gmail.com

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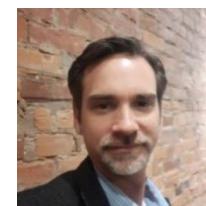
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Questions?

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Thank you for joining us!

Please return to Attendify to join the next session.



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